

she doesn't even know we're here today, thinking of her and her struggle in her country. She sits confined, as we speak here, in her home in Rangoon, unable to speak to her people or the world. But her struggle continues, and her spirit still inspires us.

Twelve years ago she went home to Burma to visit her ailing mother and found herself at the helm of a popular movement for democracy and human rights. A decade ago, she led her persecuted party in parliamentary elections that were neither free nor fair; yet they still won 80 percent of the seats. Her victory has never been recognized by the Government of Burma, but her hold on the hearts of the people in Burma has never been broken.

In the years since, she had seen her supporters beaten, tortured, and killed, yet she has never responded to hatred and violence in kind. All she has ever asked for is peaceful dialog. She has been treated without mercy, yet she has preached forgiveness, promising that in a democratic Burma there will be no retribution and nothing but honor and respect for the military.

No one has done more than she to teach us that the desire for liberty is universal, that it is a matter of conscience, not culture. When her son, Alexander, accepted her Nobel Peace Prize, he said she would never accept such an honor in her name, but only in the name of all the people of Burma. I imagine she would say the same thing today—that she would tell us that for all she has suffered, the separation from her family, the loss of her beloved husband, nothing compares to what the Burmese people, themselves, have endured, years of tyranny and poverty in a land of such inherent promise.

Our thoughts are with them. This medal stands for our determination to help them see a better day. The only weapons the Burmese people have are words, reason, and the example of this astonishing, brave woman. Let us add our voices to their peaceful arsenal. Keep using every instrument of influence to support Aung San Suu Kyi's quest for democracy through dialog.

Those who rule Burma should know that they can regain their place in the world only when they regain the trust of their own peo-

ple and respect their chosen leaders. And the woman we honor today should know, America will always be a friend to freedom in Burma—a friend for as long as it takes to reach the goal for which she has sacrificed so very much.

I would like to ask Alexander to come up here, and I'd like to ask the major to read the citation.

[*At this point, Major Mullen read the citation, and the President presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming today. We are adjourned.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The President presented the awards and medal a part of the observance of Human Rights Day. In his remarks, he referred to James Roosevelt, grandson of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, and his wife, Ann; Eric P. Schwartz, Senior Director, Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs, National Security Council; Melanne Verveer, Chief of Staff to the First Lady; Bonnie J. Campbell, Director, Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice; Theresa Loar, Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, Department of State; and Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA, (Ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Statement on the Pathways to College Network

December 6, 2000

I applaud today's announcement of the Pathways to College Network, an important partnership that will complement our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives by helping to put disadvantaged students on track to a college education. While more and more Americans are enrolling in college, too many disadvantaged students in America still lack the support, resources, motivation, and high expectations that they need to succeed.

In today's information economy, education may be the best investment of a lifetime. Over the past 8 years, we have made the largest investment in higher education since the GI bill by increasing Pell grants and creating the HOPE scholarship, the lifetime learning

tax credit, and direct student loans. To help more disadvantaged students get on track for college success, we created the GEAR UP initiative and expanded resources for TRIO.

The Pathways to College Network will build on our effort to expand college opportunities by researching successful programs and using the results to help students across the country. I salute the commitment made by six prominent foundations including the Ford and Gates Foundations, leading non-profit groups dedicated to college opportunity, and Secretary of Education Riley. The network recognizes that elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and communities must work together if we are to successfully address this issue. There is no higher priority than continuing to work to ensure that all Americans have access to a quality education.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on Funding for Child Care

December 6, 2000

Today the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is releasing an important report showing that in 1999, States were able to provide child care assistance to only 12 percent of all federally eligible low-income working families. Also today, the Children's Defense Fund is releasing a report showing that the cost of child care is the greatest barrier low-income families face in finding quality care for their children. These new findings demonstrate that too many working families are still struggling with the high cost of child care, and we must ensure America's families have access to affordable, quality child care so they can balance their responsibilities both at work and at home. Under my administration, Federal funding for child care has more than doubled, and the 1996 welfare reform law increased child care funding by \$4 billion to provide child care assistance to families moving from welfare to work and to other low-income families, but we can do more.

Two months ago we reached a bipartisan agreement with Congress to provide an \$817 million increase for the child care and devel-

opment block grant program, bringing funding to \$2 billion. In 2001 this increase would enable the program to provide child care subsidies for nearly 200,000 more children. With these new resources, combined with the child care funds provided as part of welfare reform, the program could serve more than 2.1 million children in 2001, an increase of nearly one million since 1997. We are still meeting only a fraction of the need, but this is a critical step forward. I urge Congress to complete the work it has left undone for more than 2 months and heed the message of these reports by increasing funding for affordable, quality child care. America's working families should not have to wait any longer.

Proclamation 7385—National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, 2000

December 6, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

While the bitter winds of war raged across much of the world on the morning of December 7, 1941, the United States was still at peace. At Pearl Harbor, the 130 vessels of the U.S. Pacific Fleet lay tranquil in the Sunday silence. Then, at 7:55 a.m., that silence was shattered by the sound of falling bombs and the rattle of machine-gun fire, as the war came home to America.

In making such a devastating preemptive strike, the forces of Imperial Japan sought to weaken our national spirit and cripple our military might. But our attackers would soon learn that they had seriously misjudged the character of the American people and the strength of our democracy. Though 21 ships were sunk or badly damaged, 347 aircraft destroyed or in need of significant repair, and some 3,500 Americans dead or injured, the attack on Pearl Harbor galvanized our Nation into action, reaffirmed our commitment to freedom, and strengthened our resolve to prevail.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, millions of Americans volunteered to serve in the Armed Forces. Millions of others filled